

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7642

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 24786

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: CN FR US PORG

SUBJ: INVITATION TO OAU MEETING ON MAYOTTE

REF: (A) STATE 200929; (B) ANTANANARIVO 1519;

(C) ANTANANARIVO 1504

1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA HAREL CONCERNING GUIRINGAUD VISIT TO EAST AFRICA (SEPTEL), SUBJECT OF COMORES CAME UP. HAREL SAID THAT THE POSITION OF FRANCE COULD ONLY BE COOL CONCERNING AN OAU MEETING IN MORONI CONCERNING MAYOTTE. THE FRENCH HAD FREQUENTLY MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE PEOPLE OF MAYOTTE COULD AT ANY TIME CONDUCT ANOTHER PLEBISCITE AND DECIDE TO JOIN THE COMORES. UNTIL SUCH TIME, FRANCE FELT CONSTRAINED TO ABIDE BY THE RESULTS OF THE LAST PLEBISCITE.

2. HAREL SAID THAT THE FRENCH DID NOT CONSIDER PRESIDENT ALI SOILIH TO BE A VALID INTERLOCUTOR FOR FRANCE. THEY COULD UNDERSTAND WHY THE OAU WOULD HAVE TO TAKE HIM SERIOUSLY BUT THEY DID NOT SEE WHY WESTERN COUNTRIES SHOULD CONSIDER HIM A SERIOUS POLITICAL
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LEADER. HAREL IMPLIED THAT FRANCE DID NOT THINK ALI SOILIH WOULD BE AROUND VERY LONG. HAREL ALSO SAID EXPLICITLY THAT MANY OF FRANCE'S AFRICAN FRIENDS HAD ALREADY EXPRESSED THEIR DISMAY AT ALI SOILIH'S BEHAVIOR, AND FRANCE THEREFORE THOUGHT THE OAU, WHICH WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH A FORMAL ENDORSEMENT OF ALI SOILIH'S POSITION, WOULD NOT, IN THE END, PUT MUCH

PRESSURE ON FRANCE CONCERNING MAYOTTE.

3. WE ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT WELL PLACED TO JUDGE THE
VALIDITY OF THE FRENCH OPINION OF ALI SOILIH AND HIS
GOVERNMENT. WE AGREE WITH ANTANANARIVO (REF B) THAT WE
NEED NOT AUTOMATICALLY REJECT THE INVITATION (WHICH
HAREL WAS CAREFUL NOT TO SUGGEST DIRECTLY THAT WE DO),
BUT IT WOULD SEEM ADVISABLE TO STUDY THE SITUATION
CLOSELY AND CONSULT WITH OUR OAU FRIENDS AND WESTERN
ALLIES (SUCH AS UK) BEFORE DECIDING ON OUR ATTENDANCE.
IN ANY CASE, SHOULD WE DECIDE TO ATTEND THESE
CEREMONIAL SESSIONS, WE SHOULD INFORM THE FRENCH
GOVERNMENT OF OUR DECISION AND OUR REASONS.
HARTMAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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